

By Barb Kastens, Editor

If you've ever been to Texas, you probably noticed the proliferation of equestrian-oriented stores. Drive down just about any street, in any town, and there they are, larger than life, thriving in the biggest state in the lower 48. In fact, stores in the Lone Star State make up a full 10 percent of Tack 'n Togs retail circulation, and thrive they do. That's partly because Texas claims the most number of horses—nearly three times that of any other state, according to the 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture—but also because Texans live and love the Western lifestyle. They don't just put on a cowboy hat to attend a rodeo, they wear them every day. Proudly. It's part of their heritage and what sets them apart from most of the rest of the country.

Stores that provide a link to the kind of merchandise that Texans like to buy enjoy loyal support and steady traffic from the communities that surround them. Many of those stores, such as Dennards, have a long and prosperous history here. This family-owned

operation began back in 1890 when R.E. Dennard opened a store in Sadler, Texas. It was a long, narrow building with glass shelves for display and one aisle lined with boxes of merchandise. The store has been passed down through four generations. R.E. was the great, great grandfather of Carol Dennard, who with her husband W.D. Ferguson, bought it from her father Bill in 1980. They relocated the store to downtown Whitesboro, which allowed them to expand its product offerings to include groceries, feed, lawn and garden supplies, and even baby chicks.

**The eye-appealing Western clothing department in Whitesboro offers shoppers an enormous variety of choices.**

W.D. has worked at Dennards for 48 years. He has seen a lot of changes in those years, both in the store and in his personal life. After the passing of his wife Carol, he married MaryAnn, who is active behind the scenes at

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**A gorgeous hardwood bar is among the furniture selections at the new Pilot Point store.**